



# ASG WEEKLY

*...where the people are always first.*

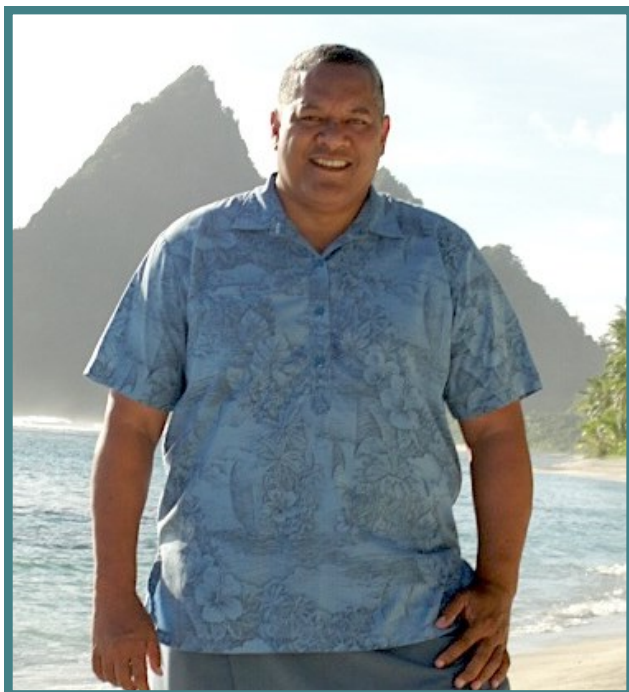
MAR 1  
2013

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ACCOUNTABILITY UNITY TRANSPARENCY EQUALITY

## Lieutenant Governor Lemanu Peleti Mauga Visits Manu'a to Inspect Prospective Locations for Service Stations...

Febriaru 27. 2013



A group of government officials from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), American Samoa Power Authority (ASPA), and community representatives, escorted the Lieutenant Governor, Lemanu Peleti Mauga to Manu'a yesterday to inspect prospective

locations to build gas stations that would service ASG and civilian vehicles. According to an official, their trip was just to inspect possible locations—the final decision will come from the Governor when he returns from the National Governor's Association

meeting in Washington D.C.

These gas stations, when completed, would service not only ASG vehicles but civilian vehicles as well—the prices would be the same across the board, according to a group representative.

The official further explained that they also visited the schools, DPW, ASPA, DPS substations, clinics, airport, wharfs, buildings and facilities.

There are issues on all government facilities to include sharing of government resources to meet our government obligations in Manu'a.

A government official visit is scheduled in the near future, with the Governor and staff to meet the people and inspect other areas of concerns.

### Calendar of Events:

Retirement Checks	Feb 28
TAOA Food Vouchers	Mar 1
ASNAP Food Stamp	Mar 1
Volume 1 Issue 5	Mar 8



### Thought of the Day

"The past is to prove that no one is perfect and the future is to prove that everyone can change."  
~ Ashfag Lone

## What's New

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## TAOA makes it easier for Senior Citizens to obtain their Monthly Food Vouchers...

The Office of Territorial Administration on Aging (TAOA) is making it easier for the Senior Citizens of American Samoa to get their food vouchers every month by distributing the vouchers closer to their respective locations of residency.

According to TAOA's Acting Director HTC Ale Tifi, effective March 1st 2013, Senior Citizens will no longer have to travel all the way to Pago Pago to get their vouchers, because TAOA has made it possible for them to pick up their vouchers from their home districts.

There will be 3 stations available for Eastern, Central, and Western Districts. The East and West stations will open from 7am-12pm and Central will open from 7am-4pm every 1st day of the every month depending on Government business days. The schedule is as follows:

- Eastern District Station will be located in Fagaitua village at Leiato's Residence and will serve the villages of Alega to Onenoa including Masefau and Aoa.
- Central Station will be located in Pago Pago village at the TAOA Office and will serve the villages of Pago Pago to Nu'uuli including Vatia, Afono, and Fagasa.
- Western District Station will be located in Pava'ia'i village at Vele's Residence and will serve the villages of Tafuna to Fagamalo including Aoloau and Aasu.

TAOA staff would like to advise all food voucher recipients to please go to their designated stations during distribution hours. If you have more questions about changes or other programs offered by TAOA please call 633-1251 and ask for Tafia Taimalelagi.

## FESOASOANI LE OFISA O TAGATA MATUTUA (TAOA) I LE ATUNU'U

Ua fa'a'iloa mai e le Susuga a le Sui-Fa'atonu o le Ofisa o Tagata Matutua, le tofā ia Tifi Ale, e amataina nei i le asō, Aso Faraile, Mati 1, 2013 ona fa'agasolo atu lana aufaigaluega e tufatufa atu pepa fa'atau o mea tausami (food vouchers) i alalafaga e lata ane i nu'u ma afio'aga o tamā ma tinā matutua.

Ua mafua ona faia lea fuafuaga, ina ia fa'afaigofieina mo tamā ma tinā le feoa'i mamao mai i le ofisa tu-totonu i Pago Pago. E tolu ni nu'u e to'ai atu i ai le atunu'u. O le taimi e amataina ai ona tatala lenei auaunaga, o le itula e 7am i le taeao ma e fa'amuta i le 12 p.m. i le aoauli. O lo'o galulue le 'aufaigaluega a le TAOA e fa'afeso'ota'i le mamalu o tama ma tina uma o lo'o iai i lea porokalama.

**SASA'E** - Faga'itua i le Maota o Le'iato - Alalafaga e a'afia ai Alega e tau i Onenoa, fa'atasi ai Masefau, Masausi, Sa'ilele ma 'Aoa.

**OGĀ-TOTONU** - Ofisa tu-totonu o Tagata Matutua i Pago Pago - e a'afia ai Pago Pago e tau i Nu'uuli, fa'atasi ai Vatia, Afono ma Fagasa.

**SISIFO** - Pava'ia'i i le Laoa o le Tofa ia Vele, e a'afia ai Tafuna e tau i Fagamalo, fa'atasi ai Aoloau ma Aasu.

Fa'afeso'ota'i ane le 633-1251 ma fesili mo Tafia Taimalelagi.

## POTU FA'AMAMĀ TOTO I LE FALEMA'I

O se feiloa'iga ma gasegase o lo'o fa'amamā o latou toto ile falema'i, na maua ai se tasi o fitāituga o lo'o feagai ma nei gasegase, aua o afaina e le ma'alofia. Saunoa le Fa'atonu o le LBJ, Mike Gestenberger ua tele le afaina o lo'o tupu pea ma o lo'o taumafai pea e fofō nei fa'afitauli, ae e lē faigofie.

Afai e le malosi le tulei mai o le suavai i masini fa'amamā toto, e toe fo'i nisi gasegase i aiga, se'ia toe malosi mai le suavai. O lenei fa'afitauli ua leva ona feagai ma le falema'i. Na talanoa ma le ofisa o le ASPA, le susuga ia John Utu, o le tala mai, e le o mae'a ona fa'aauau galuega a le falema'i i le latou tane vai, e le mafai e le ASPA ona o atu e fa'amamā ma galuea'iina loa se'i iloga e mae'a ona fausia.

Ua fa'aopoopo le totogi o le \$20.00 i le vaiaso pe a e malaga atu e fa'amamā lou toto. O le saunoaga a le Fa'atonu, ua tele le alofa, ae ua matuā taugatā tele le tau o le soifuaga i nei vaitaimi. O le a fa'aauau atu pea ni tala mo lenei tulaga i aso o i luma.

## ASPA - UA TELE PA'Ū O TAU O ELETISE

Ua fa'aalia i le tusi mai o le Ofisa o le Eletise ma le Suavai i le Afioga a le Kovana Sili, le tofā i le To'oto'o Lolo Matalasi Moliga, ua amata on fa'aitiitia tau o le uila ma le suavai, ma o lo'o sa'ilia pea nisi auala e fesoasoani atili mo le atunu'u, a'o fa'agasolo pea a latou galuega.

Ua fautuaina fo'i e le ASPA le Afioga a le Kovana Sili, e ao lava ina taumafai le Malō e vave ona totogiina lana pili o le Eletise ma le Suavai i le ASPA, ona vave maua fo'i lea e le atunu'u se tasi to'o-maga.

## FA'AMUTA O LE TIPI O SIAKI MO KAMUPANĪ 'ESE'ESE

Vaganā le ASPA, ASTCA, Faletupe Atina'e, Koluse Mūmū, Lafoga, Saogalemū ma le litaea, e lē toe tipiina se siaki o totogi a le 'aufaigaluega a le Malo mo se tasi lava fa'ala-potopotoga ona ua taugatā tele le tau o nei auaunaga, o le saunoa lea a le susuga a le Teutupe a le Malo.

E tusa o le \$156,000.00 i le tausaga tupe a le 'au totogi lafoga o le atunu'u o lo'o ma'imaui i le fa'atupeina o lenei auaunaga, ae e le mo tagata uma o le atunu'u e fa'aogaina. E fa'amalie atu ai i le 'aufaigaluega a le Malo, ae e sili lava le fa'ao'o o lau siaki mo lou totogi i ou 'a'ao ma e toto-giina ai lava e 'oe o au aitalafu, o le fa'aopoopoga lea a le Susuga ia Falema'o (Phil) Pili, Teutupe, Malo o Amerika Samoa.

## ASG Treasurer Elaborates about Discontinuation of Payroll Deductions to Private Vendors...

A lot of noise has been circulating the media about ASG Treasurer Falema'o Phil Pili's decision to discontinue payroll deductions to private vendors.

"...the cost to the taxpayers for this service is well over \$156,000.00 annually plus administrative costs to provide a service that is for the sole benefit of the vendors, not for the taxpayer!" according to Falema'o.

He further explained that no revenues from the vendors are received by ASG to provide this service. "...this is unfair to the taxpayer to expect ASG to pay for a service that provides a convenience for some, but not for all..."

Bottom-line according to Treasurer is that continuing payroll deductions is not cost-effective and it is costing taxpayers' money. "...Our first and most important priority is to assure that each government employee receives their payroll checks in a timely fashion and without delay due to unnecessary payroll deductions. We must serve the PEOPLE FIRST! That is ASG's priority."

The elimination of payroll deductions to most businesses will be effective February 28. The exceptions are payments to the American Samoa Power Authority, American Samoa Telecommunications Authority, Development Bank of American Samoa, Red Cross and normal ASG benefit withholdings, such as retirement and taxes. Current Direct Deposits will not be affected by these changes unless Payroll is advised otherwise.



## American Samoa Power Authorities (ASPA) Reduced Rates as Promised...

According to a letter to Governor Lolo Matalasi Moliga dated February 13, 2013 from the ASPA board of directors—newly approved actions and developments that would benefit their customers, one of them being the reduced rates of utility bills.

**Rates and Fees for Water, Electricity, Waste Water, and Solid Waste will be reduced and modified** and a 50% amnesty is offered to delinquent inactive accounts with fixed charges. Families who leave their homes unoccupied for a period of time may pay \$50 to reactivate their accounts instead of the \$300 as before.

**Solid Waste rates will be reduced for those families living far away from collection points alongside roads** and the vending fee for meter customers for after-hours has been reduced from \$5 to \$2.

**Other actions ASPA mentioned in the letter, was a proposal to help reduce ASG's debt to ASPA.** According to the letter, if this debt is paid off over a reasonable amount of time, customers of American Samoa will benefit. Without sufficient cash, ASPA cannot sustain the rate and fee reductions already approved by the Board.



# Dialysis Center Faced with Major Issues that need Immediate Attention

ASG Weekly stumbled upon a few citizens at the Dialysis Unit in the LBJ Medical Center in Faga'alu and they had a few things to say about some of the issues they are facing as patients there. Two of the issues they most complained about were the water pressure problems with the dialysis equipment and the new \$20 facility fees they now have to pay every week so they can get their dialysis treatments.

ASG Weekly's Interviews with LBJ CEO Mike Gerstenberger and ASPA officials regarding issues brought forth by the community are as follow:

## Water pressure problems

In an earlier interview with an ASPA official, Mr. John Utu, we were informed that ASPA was waiting for clearance from LBJ, to start the work on the water tank to get it operational. "By law, we are only allowed to give an output of 20psi (pounds per square inch) of water to each establishment. In order to compensate for

**"Water pressure has been a problem at the dialysis center for years. Sometimes we would have to send patients home because of this..."**

that at LBJ, they (LBJ) have built their own water tank and we still have yet to get the go ahead to work on it for them" stated Mr. Utu. "We are prepared and waiting for the opportunity to get in there and do the work..." he later stated.



"Water pressure has been a problem at the dialysis center for years. Sometimes we would have to send patients home because of this..." "...this really is an ASPA issue but we do credit them for the great work that they have put forth into this matter. We should be done setting up the filtration systems and have the back up (water tank) tested and ready in a matter of days" says the Executive of LBJ Tropical Medical Center.

We now understand that this project that has taken six years to complete is now nearing its end. ASPA officials were not available to confirm the validity of this particular project nearing its end. We will be following up with this issue as it progresses.

## New Facility Fees

Another issue raised was the new facility fees that are now being assessed for the dialysis center. The fees now stand at \$20.00 per week for each patient on dialysis. "We would love to give out free services but the fact remains, without the funding we cannot afford this option..." says the Chief Executive.

When asked about the Medicare program patients he replied, "Medicare only pays for 80% of the hospital bill. We were informed that LBJ will not be charging the patients the other 20% which will save the Medicare patients from paying \$38.41 for each visit. Anything that Medicare doesn't pay, Medicaid usually covers, but how much they pick up is impossible to determine because we are on a 'waiver system' explained Mr. Gerstenberger. "We just do not have the revenues to carry on in this manner..." he concluded.

The Dialysis issues mentioned here are just a fraction of the problems our local hospital is dealing with at the moment—there are also issues regarding their budget decreasing every year cutting off much of the funding that would provide better health care for our people like off-island referrals, newer and better equipment that could offer better diagnostics for disease and improved treatments that our people deserve. So, ASG Weekly will continue to research and keep you updated with the current on-goings at our local hospital.